

THE PRESIDENT'S INTELLIGENCE CHECKLIST

10 NOV. 1961
~~TOP SECRET~~

1. Berlin

a) Moscow appears to be stepping up pace of its efforts to bring the West to early negotiations.

b) The Soviet Ambassador in Bonn has been told to see Adenauer, Khrushchev received Bonn's ambassador yesterday, and Gromyko^A urged Ambassador Thompson to see Khrushchev.

c) Gromyko, in informal remarks to Western ambassadors on Tuesday, made no mention of a peace treaty and said that negotiations could be limited to West Berlin access and status. He insisted on demilitarization and termination of the occupation status, but said the USSR would provide the "most formal guarantees" that East Germany would respect an agreement. Financial and economic ties between Bonn and Berlin could be maintained, but West Berlin could not be part of West Germany.

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2. Bloc Military Movements

a) The maneuver phase of the Warsaw Pact exercises may finally be starting, involving Soviet, Polish, Czech and East German units.

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3. South Vietnam

a) [redacted] 50X1

[redacted] Viet Cong attacks of the past week in widely separated provinces were launched to counter South Vietnamese sweeps rather than as a new phase of large scale offensives, but that attacks with up to 1000 men can be increasingly expected where Communist intelligence indicates they will result in a Viet Cong military advantage. [redacted]

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b) While the majority of responsible South Vietnamese appear to favor the introduction of US troops, several South Vietnamese cabinet ministers and Diem's advisor, his brother Ngo Dinh Nhu, feel that the introduction of US combat troops would be a public admission of South Vietnamese failure and additional grounds for Communist propaganda. They prefer technical or logistical units. [redacted]

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c) Viet Cong units, informed of a rumor that in November Americans will directly command troops of "Diem, Chiang Kai Shek, Thailand and the Philippines" in South Vietnam, have been told to report the presence of foreign troops and describe their weapons, including "all types of poisonous gas." The Viet Cong may be preparing to counter the proposed defoliant program. We would also not be surprised to see a general "biological warfare" propaganda campaign similar to that launched during the Korean War. [redacted]

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4. Laos

a) Peiping radio threatened yesterday that the Geneva talks had reached a point where "no more negotiations are possible"; there had to be a choice between a coalition government or the "outbreak of war."

b) During the past two weeks, the Soviet representative at Geneva, repeatedly urging the rapid formation of a coalition government, has expressed concern over the danger of a "renewed outbreak of military action."

c) Meanwhile, in Laos there has been no progress toward a political settlement. Souvanna has now issued a call for tripartite talks on the 17th in the Plaine des Jarres--a site still probably unacceptable to the Boun Oum government, which wants the talks at Hin Heup.

[redacted] renewed fighting if talk break down, Souvanna did say the present situation could go on "for weeks or months."

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5. Albania further
isolated

- a) All Bloc ambassadors, except China's, are being called home--leaving behind charges d'affaires.
- b) The Albanian regime, understandably apprehensive about further more serious measures, has restricted food consumption, has issued instructions for evacuation and mobilization measures in the event of emergency, and has cordoned off the Soviet compound in Tirana.

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NOTES

- A. Communist and left-wing groups are angry over the composition of the new Ecuadorean cabinet.

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- D. Raul Castro was seen in Sofia on Sunday and in Bucharest on Monday, apparently enroute to Moscow.

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- F. [redacted] the French underground nuclear test in the Sahara, which we had expected early in November, may have been delayed [redacted]

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- H. The Soviets may now have offered to airlift food and other supplies to migrating Pushtoon nomads stranded in Afghanistan after being turned back at the border by the Pakistanis.

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